

**Wilma McKern Bauer**  
**Narrator**

**Janet Worthington**  
**Interviewer**

**Gary Worthington**  
**Video Photography**

**July 31, 2006**  
**At the Kam Wah Chung Interpretive Center**  
**John Day, Oregon**

Wilma McKern Bauer	-WB
Janet Worthington	-JW
Gary Worthington	-GW

**JW:** Mrs. Bauer, could you tell us about how you had contact with Kam Wah Chung and Doc Hay?

**WB:** My parents never went to another doctor that I know of, and he healed us all, especially my father. He had lock jaw. This I know from memory, from mom telling me. My parents' names by the way were Jay and Jessie McKern. Mom and Dad had a ranch since 1882...in the family...in Mt. Vernon. Dad got lock jaw; they couldn't put a knife between his teeth. It was that severe. My uncle Clyde came to John Day and got Doc Hay and told him the symptoms. He took Doc Hay to the ranch in Mt. Vernon and Doc Hay brought the herbs with him or had stewed the herbs before he came to the ranch. If he hadn't stayed all night, dad would have died. It was that severe. That must have been about 1934-35, so I was only seven or eight years old. Everything that I was told was from my mother.

**JW:** Did you visit Kam Wah Chung yourself?

**WB:** Oh yes, in fact Doc Hay has felt my pulse. I don't know what was the matter with me, but the medicine tasted horrible. I got well and have enjoyed many years in Grant County...many healthy years. Maybe, that's because I drank the medicine even though it tasted horrible.

**JW:** Would you describe the Kam Wah Chung building for me as you recall?

**WB:** As I recall, it was green and red, and there was and still is...I think...a steel door that has a bullet hole in it...that was from some cowboys celebrating...that's the story. You just walked in and it was really dark. Off to the right there was a partition with bars, that's where all of his herbs were kept. On the left was Doc Hays bedroom. There was a

bed in there...just a little cot. I never was further into the kitchen as a child, but I was as a visitor to the KamWah Chung many times.

**JW:** Do you recall when you went there anything about the heating? Did you ever go there in the winter time? Was there heat in that big room that you came in?

**WB:** I can't remember that. I don't know, as I say, I was probably only seven or eight when I did go.

**JW:** Do you remember the radio or victrola, any kind of music being on.

**WB:** No.

**JW:** Do you recall anything about the outside of the building; was there a garden, a fish pond, anything about what was around?

**WB:** No, I don't remember anything about that.

**JW:** Would you describe Doc Hay for us?

**WB:** Yes, he a very thin man, but he wasn't stooped. His eyes, I wouldn't imagine what color they were the lids were closed at all times since I remember, and they would just flicker a little. He would come shuffling out. He wore black clothes, black pants, sateen or silk, sateen I would imagine. He had little slippers on and a shirt that was loose fitting. He had a little beanie type cap on that had a little button type thing on top. He brought with him his little black pillow, and you would put your hand on the little black pillow like this, and he would feel your pulse with these two fingers. He just felt around, and up, and down, and all around, and got his diagnosis.

**JW:** Do you recall anything about his fingernails, his hands?

**WB:** His fingernails were long.

**JW:** Were they?

**WB:** Yes, and kind of curved under.

**JW:** Could you show me about how long they were?

**WB:** I suppose less than half an inch.

**JW:** Was he clean shaven? Did he have a beard?

**WB:** He had a little beard, but not much. I don't know if weather Leon would have shaved him or not, but he was quite old, maybe his beard was kind of beginning to lessen.

**JW:** Can you tell me how business was conducted when you went in and how payment was made for...do you recall?

**WB:** I wonder if my mom didn't take him some eggs. I do know that there was some checks. I know they were from my dad, because they are in the ledger there that were never cashed, but I know also that, that must have been for a bottle of whiskey, because dad never took any of us to the doctor. The un-cashed checks would have probably been for a little bottle, which he wasn't a drinker, but he always had some at the house for friends. I'm just assuming that.

**JW:** That's an interesting possibility here. Could you describe Leon for us?

**WB:** He wasn't as impressive to me. He was shorter than Doc Hay as I remember, and younger, and very knowledgeable, because he was the one who mixed the herbs. Well Doc Hay couldn't do it, because he was blind. So, Leon did do the herb mixing, I would imagine, I always assumed he did.

**JW:** Was there anyone else there, do you recall?

**WB:** I never saw anyone there, unless it was another patient, but Doc Hay and Leon.

**JW:** Did you know anything about Leon's businesses, his car dealership, or his real estate?

**WB:** No, only what I've heard, and I understand he is quite an astute business man. I have heard that he did loan Lloyd Ogalvie the money to start his business, the Ford Motor Company, which Lloyd had all of his life. I don't know that for certain.

**JW:** How about his English? Did Doc Hay speak English really well? Could you understand what he said?

**WB:** No, I don't remember that. My mom said, when he was out at the house with dad, with lock jaw, he said, "me don't stay all night, you die sure by morning."

**JW:** When he spent the night, where did he sleep? Did he sleep in a room?

**WB:** I don't know, probably in a chair, I don't have any idea, we only had two bedrooms and four kids, and I think he would have stayed right by dad.

**JW:** Did you ever hear Doc Hay or Leon talk about their families back in China?

**WB:** No, never did. I want to correct that, we had three bedrooms and four kids.

**JW:** Okay. What about China town, was that in existence? Do you remember any buildings around there?

**WB:** As I say, I was only seven, and most of the things I remember is what I have heard told.

**JW:** I see. When the museum was reopened did you know anything about the condition that they found the store in? Was it just as it had been left or had there been vandals?

**WB:** Not that I know of, it was exactly as if they had walked out and left. I'm sure there wasn't vandalism. At that time we didn't have vandalism.

**JW:** What was Gordon Glass's role in all this?

**WB:** He was very instrumental in getting it preserved. I do have Laura's address at home. Do you know Laura?

**JW:** I don't know her, but I do think we have a phone number for her too.

**WB:** She is in Arizona...Sun City...I think. She is a relative by marriage...aunt...I have her phone number incase we need to call her.

**JW:** Okay. What about your nephew and his role? What was he involved in?

**WB:** We weren't living here at the time, but I know he was very instrumental in marking everything. He would be a really good one for you to contact.

**GW:** This is Craig McKern?

**WB:** Craig McKern, yes...lives in Eugene.

**JW:** Was he working for the newspaper at the time?

**WB:** Blue Mountain Eagle.

**JW:** What was his position there?

**WB:** He just wrote articles.

**JW:** He was a reporter?

**WB:** Yes.

**JW:** Do you know of any items from the store or souvenirs that came out of the store or museum that may be around or that people may have?

**WB:** I have two medicine bottles.

**JW:** You have two medicine bottles?

**WB:** Yes.

**JW:** Wonderful!

**WB:** One's about shaped like my thumb and about...and the other one is about the size of my finger and it's heavy glass. There is a vial right down the middle and that's where the medicine was. It had a cork stopper sealed with red wax.

**JW:** Do you recall what was in those bottles?

**WB:** Oh no. The long one might have been...I don't know what was the matter with mom at that time, but Doc Hay gave her a liniment and he told her to put it on her arm right here and to take a fifty-cent piece and rub, like this, until red blisters came.

**JW:** And, she did that?

**WB:** Yes.

**JW:** She got better?

**WB:** Yes.

**JW:** That's all amazing. How about any photographs from that era? Do you have any photographs?

**WB:** No, I wished I did.

**JW:** Is there anything else you would like to tell us about Kam Wah Chung, or Doc Hay? What do you feel the contributions the Chinese made in this community?

**WB:** They were tremendous, the poor things. There are some Chinese mines up on the middle fork...I think it is...where they have mined and piled the rocks...they are all in a cone shape, high, very high, as high as this ceiling...very interesting. They would work the tailing piles after the miners were through and they found gold. I think they had a garden. I think they raised vegetables. I think I've heard that...I'm sorry...I was so young.

**JW:** Oh, we understand. I think you are doing very well and got lots of wonderful details for us, so that's very good, anything else about Kam Wah Chung or Doc Hay?

**WB:** I wrote some things down...that's about all I can remember.

**JW:** I want to thank you very much for taking the time to come in and see us.

**WB:** I wished could have known more. They were just wonderful people, yeah, wonderful people. Oh, I do know one other thing mom passed on...no my dad passed this on, which he didn't relate very many stories...unless they were cowboy stories, because he used to run wild horses. He told me that there was a family that lived side by side and they had children the same age. They both got sick at the same time. One family took their child to the china doctor, to Doc Hay, and the other woman said, "No, china man was going to touch her child", and that child died, and the other child got well.

**JW:** Well, that's an interesting story.

**GW:** End of Interview